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General Assembly

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Committee on Conferences
Organizational session for 2007

Annotated provisional agenda for the organizational session for 2007

1. Adoption of the agenda for the organizational session for 2007.
2. Election of officers.
3. Organization of work for 2007.
4. Programme of work for 2007.
5. Adoption of the agenda for the substantive session of 2007.
6. Other business.

Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda for the organizational session for 2007

2. Election of officers

Rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly provides that committees other than Main Committees shall elect a Chairman, one or more Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence.

In past years, the Committee on Conferences has elected, in addition to the Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

At its organizational session for 1989, on 1 March 1989, the Committee agreed in principle that thenceforth the chairmanship would rotate annually among the regional groups.

3. Organization of work for 2007

At its 341st meeting, on 27 August 1992, the Committee on Conferences decided to maintain its biennial programme of work, dealing with items relating to documentation in even-numbered years and those relating to meetings in odd-

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numbered years. The Committee also decided that some items would be considered on an annual basis.

At its organizational session for 2006, on 11 May 2006, the Committee adopted its agenda for 2006 and requested the Secretariat to submit a draft agenda for 2007 to the Committee at its organizational session for 2007.

In paragraph 4 of its resolution 46/190 A, the General Assembly took note of the guidelines adopted by the Committee with regard to intersessional departures from the approved calendar of conferences and meetings.[1] At its substantive session of 1994, the Committee decided that requests for intersessional departures submitted to the Committee should, in future, be reviewed by the Bureau, in consultation with the Secretariat, for subsequent action. At its substantive session of 1995, the Committee decided that requests for intersessional departures submitted to the Committee that involved a change of venue should be referred to the members for approval. Departures that involved other types of changes should, as the Committee had decided at its substantive session of 1994, be reviewed by the Bureau, in consultation with the Secretariat, for subsequent action.

As stated in the report on improving the performance of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (A/57/289, para. 15), in order to administer the programme of meetings to comply strictly with the calendar of conferences and meetings as approved by the General Assembly, with the exception of plenary meetings of the Assembly, the Security Council and the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, ad hoc meeting extensions beyond normal working hours are not accommodated by conference services. Requests for sessions beyond authorized duration, or intersessional "informal consultations" that take the form of additional, unapproved sessions under another name, will be channelled for consideration through the Committee on Conferences in accordance with mandated arrangements. Statements of programme budget implications will be issued in such instances, where required.

Moreover, meetings of the Committee may be required in compliance with paragraph 6 of resolution 35/10 A, by which the General Assembly decided that all proposals affecting the schedule of conferences and meetings made at sessions of the Assembly are to be reviewed by the Committee when administrative implications are being considered under the requirements of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

4. Programme of work for 2007

The terms of reference of the Committee are set forth in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B.

The annex to the present document contains a draft agenda for the substantive session of 2007, followed by annotations, which takes into account the earlier decisions of the Committee and subsequent decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly.

As in the 2006 session, reporting on all matters pertaining to the pattern of conferences will be consolidated into one report in 2007.

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/46/32), para. 77.

Although the agenda for the substantive session follows the resolutions under the pattern of conferences agenda item, the Committee may wish to organize its work along different lines.

5. **Adoption of the agenda for the substantive session of 2007**

6. **Other business**

Annex

Draft agenda for the substantive session of 2007

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
2. Calendar of conferences and meetings:
   (a) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243;
   (b) Adoption of the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings for 2008-2009;
   (c) Consideration of the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings of subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council for 2008-2009.
3. Meetings management/improved utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities:
   (a) Intersessional departures for 2007 and related matters;
   (b) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs, and consultations with/ letters to bodies concerning utilization of the conference services available to them;
   (c) Provision of interpretation services to meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States;
   (d) Improved utilization of conference facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi;
   (e) Improved utilization of the conference centre at the Economic Commission for Africa.
4. Integrated global management/results of the work of the task forces and follow-up on their recommendations.
5. Translation and interpretation-related matters:
   (a) Workload standards;
   (b) Freelance interpretation at the United Nations Office at Vienna;
   (c) Succession planning.
6. Documentation and publication-related matters.
7. Organization of work.
8. Adoption of the report.

Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings

(a) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243

In paragraph 15 of its resolution 47/202 A, the General Assembly demanded that all subsidiary organs of the Assembly comply with the provisions of section I, paragraph 7, of its resolution 40/243, in which it had decided that no subsidiary organ of the Assembly would meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

In accordance with the procedure established by the Committee at its 1986 session and reaffirmed at its 1992 session, chairpersons of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly that wish to meet at Headquarters during the main part of the Assembly should submit their requests to the Chairperson of the Committee.

(b) Adoption of the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings for 2008-2009

A draft calendar for the biennium 2008-2009 will be submitted by the Secretariat to the Committee on Conferences at its substantive session of 2007.

The Committee will submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings for 2008-2009.

(c) Consideration of the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings of subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council for 2008-2009

The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 1998/103, decided to invite the Committee to review the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings of the Council and to submit, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council. The draft calendar for the biennium 2008-2009, which is to be presented to the Council at its substantive session of 2007 in July, is expected to be available for consideration by the Committee before the substantive session of the Council. The Committee may wish to consider meeting at that time in order to discuss the draft and to convey its observations to the Council.

3. Meetings management/improved utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities

(a) Intersessional departures for 2007 and related matters

A compilation of such matters will be provided for inclusion in the report of the Committee.

(b) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs, and consultations with/letters to bodies concerning utilization of the conference services available to them

In section II.A, paragraph 3, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly welcomed the steps taken by those bodies that had adjusted their programme of work in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources and requested the Committee on Conferences to continue consultations with the secretariats and bureaux of bodies that underutilized their conference-servicing resources.

(c) Provision of interpretation services to meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States

In section II.A, paragraph 4, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly recognized the importance of meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States for the smooth functioning of the sessions of intergovernmental bodies and requested the Secretary-General to ensure that, as far as possible, all requests for conference services for the meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States were met. In paragraph 5, it noted with concern the difficulties experienced by Member States owing to the lack of conference services for some of those meetings. In paragraph 6, it also noted with concern that, although the percentage of meetings held by regional and other major groupings of Member States that were provided with interpretation services in the four main duty stations in 2005 had increased to 87 per cent, as compared with 85 per cent in 2004, the figure was still below the 98 per cent provided with services from May 2001 to April 2002, 92 per cent from May 2002 to April 2003 and 90 per cent from May 2003 to April 2004.

In paragraph 7, the General Assembly recalled that meetings held by regional and other major groupings of Member States had so far been provided with interpretation services on an ad hoc basis, in accordance with established practice, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to explore innovative ways to address that problem and to report thereon to the Assembly through the Committee on Conferences. In paragraph 8, the Assembly once again urged intergovernmental bodies to take into account and make provision for such meetings in their programmes of work.

(d) Improved utilization of conference facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi

In section II.A, paragraph 9, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly noted with satisfaction that, in accordance with several Assembly resolutions, including resolution 60/236 B, section II.A, paragraph 10, all meetings of Nairobi-based United Nations bodies had taken place in Nairobi in 2005, but reiterated the need for vigilance in that respect, and requested the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session through the Committee on Conferences.

(e) Improved utilization of the conference centre at the Economic Commission for Africa

In section II.A, paragraph 10, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly welcomed the fact that international and local corporations and academic institutions were being allowed to host events at the Economic Commission for Africa conference centre after screening, on a case-by-case basis, by the United Nations Security and Safety Service to ensure compliance with the United Nations headquarters minimum security standards, which was likely to contribute to increasing the utilization of the centre. In paragraph 11, the Assembly welcomed the efforts undertaken to increase utilization of the conference facilities at the centre and to align the methodology used to compile utilization statistics with that of Conference Services at the four main duty stations, including building on the cooperative agreement the Commission had established with the Division of Conference Services at the United Nations Office at Nairobi.

The General Assembly, in paragraph 12, requested the Secretary-General to continue efforts to ensure that the Economic Commission for Africa strengthened linkages with other centres and bodies, and in paragraph 13, it requested him to continue to explore means to increase the utilization of the conference centre of the Commission, bearing in mind the headquarters minimum operating security standards, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session through the Committee on Conferences.

4. Integrated global management/results of the work of the task forces and follow-up on their recommendations

In section III, paragraph 6, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly recalled section II.B, paragraph 4, of its resolution 60/236 B, in which it had requested the Secretary-General to ensure that measures taken by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to seek the evaluation by Member States of the quality of the conference services provided to them as a key performance indicator of the Department provided equal opportunities to Member States to present their evaluation in the six official languages of the United Nations and were in full compliance with relevant resolutions of the Assembly, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly, through the Committee on Conferences, on progress made in that regard.

In paragraph 7, the General Assembly also recalled section II.B, paragraph 6, of its resolution 60/236 B and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Committee on Conferences, on both the results of the work of the task forces and the outcome of the ongoing consultations among United Nations duty stations on a follow-up to the recommendations of the task forces. Furthermore, in paragraph 8, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to keep the Assembly apprised of progress made in integrated global management.

5. Translation and interpretation-related matters

(a) Workload standards

In section V, paragraph 7, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly noted the proposal on workload standards to develop a comprehensive methodology for performance measurement and management from a full-system perspective and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly periodically, starting at its sixty-second session, on the specific indicators proposed under the headings of timeliness, quality, financial performance and organizational learning and growth.

(b) Freelance interpretation at the United Nations Office at Vienna

In section V, paragraph 9, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly noted with concern the high reliance on freelance interpretation at the United Nations Office at Vienna and requested the Secretary-General to report on any inconsistency in quality of interpretation services related thereto, including at other duty stations, and on measures to address that issue, if needed, to the Assembly at its sixty-second session through the Committee on Conferences.

(c) Succession planning

In section V, paragraph 11, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly noted the Secretary-General's plans to address the issue of succession planning by enhancing internal and external training programmes, developing staff exchange programmes between organizations and participating in outreach activities to institutions that trained language staff for international organizations. In paragraph 12, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to hold competitive examinations for the recruitment of language staff sufficiently in advance so as to fill current and future vacancies in language services in a timely manner, bearing in mind the persistent situation at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and to inform the Assembly at its sixty-second session of efforts in that regard.

6. Documentation and publication-related matters

In section IV, paragraph 4, of its resolution 61/236, the General Assembly noted with concern the continued high level of late submissions of documentation by author departments, which, in turn, negatively impacted the functioning of intergovernmental bodies and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly, at its sixty-second session, through the Committee on Conferences, on impediments, if any, to achieving full compliance with the 10-week and 6-week rules for the issuance of pre-session documents, including, where appropriate, proposed measures to address such impediments.

In paragraph 5, the General Assembly welcomed the new accountability mechanism set up in the Secretariat for the submission, processing and issuance of documentation and requested the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Committee on Conferences for its further consideration and analysis, in order to provide concrete recommendations to the Assembly at its sixty-second session.

7. Organization of work

In section II.A, paragraph 20, of its resolution 57/283 B, the General Assembly encouraged the Committee on Conferences to keep under continued review the procedures for the participation of observers in the work of the Committee.

8. Adoption of the report